

**Remarks of William A. Morange
NYS Metropolitan Transportation Authority
House Homeland Security Subcommittee on
Emergency Preparedness, Science and Technology
Washington, DC
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Good Morning Chairman King and members of the Subcommittee. My name is William A. Morange, and I am the Deputy Executive Director and Director of Security of the New York State Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA.)

I appreciate this opportunity to discuss what the MTA has done and continues to do in light of 9/11, the Madrid incident in 2004 and the most recent events in London, to train to respond to terrorist and other emergency incidents in our vast transportation system.

Before I address the specifics of the topic at hand, permit me to tell you a bit about the MTA. As you may know, the MTA is the largest multi-modal transit provider in the Western Hemisphere and is comprised of several operating entities:

- MTA New York City Transit (NYCT)
- MTA Long Island Rail Road (LIRR)
- MTA Long Island Bus (LIBus)
- MTA Metro-North Railroad (MNR)
- MTA Bus Company (MTABus)
- MTA Bridges and Tunnels (B&T)

We provide some 8 million subway, rail and bus rides each day in a 4,000 square mile, 14 county, two-state metropolitan region, using 8,577 subway and commuter rail cars operating over 2,058 miles of track and over 6,000 buses covering in excess of 3,200 route miles. Our grand total of 2.4 billion rides a year accounts for approximately one-third of all transit rides taken in the United States. In addition, our 7 bridges and 2 tunnels carry approximately 900,000 vehicles a day.

The events of September 11th were certainly traumatic for our region and our system. We were front and center at Ground Zero, with three separate subway stations directly serving the World Trade Center site and with hundreds of local and express buses disembarking passengers at the perimeter of the complex. It is safe to suggest that more than 80% of the Trade Center's 50,000 workers took one or more MTA services to get to work each day.

But as tragic as the day was for New Yorkers and the nation, there was one overwhelmingly positive outcome on 9/11 for the MTA and for ALL our customers and employees. Despite the fact that our Cortland Street 1&9 station was completely destroyed by the collapse of the twin

towers; that four other stations were completely put out of service for as much as a year after the tragedy, and; that Church and West Streets, major north- and south-bound local and express bus routes were blocked by massive amounts of debris, not a single MTA customer or employee was killed or seriously injured in or on our system that day.

Why, you may ask? Was it simply luck? Perhaps in part, but much of the answer lies in the MTA's long abiding commitment to preparing for emergencies. Our operating agencies have traditionally done more than simply writing volumes of emergency operating and response plans that sit on shelves. For many years, they have taken part in realistic multi-agency, multi-modal drills of those plans several times a year.

On 9/11 in accordance with our plans and our drills, our subways whisked tens of thousands of riders from the virtual center of the World Trade Center site to safe locations north and south. Our buses carried hundreds of thousands of evacuees off Manhattan island. Our railroads transported shocked commuters safely to their homes and returned with dedicated rescue workers who had no other way to get into the City to help. Our bridges and tunnels played not only key evacuation roles, but, in the case of the Brooklyn Battery Tunnel, became the lifeline for emergency personnel and rescue equipment heading *toward* the scene.

Some of those activities had been anticipated in previous emergency drills – though admittedly not on as large or dramatic a scale. Nonetheless, the experience, lessons learned, and perhaps *most importantly*, the relationships forged in those exercises certainly saved lives that day.

Since 9/11 we actually had a real life opportunity to test what we do on a regional scale and our preparation once again proved to be invaluable to protecting our customers and employees. When the lights went out on August 14th, 2003, we – along with our partners in emergency preparedness throughout the region -- were able to execute the safe evacuation of over 400,000 subway and rail customers from both underground and elevated parts of our system. We are proud that there were also no customer or employee injuries in those instances – a truly amazing feat in that the entire service region I described earlier was affected.

What I'd like to do is take you through what each of our agencies did prior to 9/11 – and continue to do – on a regular basis to prepare for emergencies in terms of both *physical* drills -- with hundreds of participants -- and *table-top* drills. I would then like to wrap up by describing what we have done to involve and educate our customers about how to prepare for potential emergency situations, something we believe is key to their safety.

New York City Transit (NYCT)

NYCT is the largest member of the MTA family, operating over 8,000 subway and 46,000 bus trips a day within the City of New York. NYCT's Office of System Safety (OSS) oversees/coordinates four emergency drills annually: two for the Dept. of Subways; one for the Dept. of Buses, and; one for the Staten Island Railway. This just happens to be the same number of drills that were conducted pre-9/11. Only the size and scope of those drills may have changed a bit.

Depending on the type of drill, participants hail from other parts of the MTA transportation family (i.e. the MTA PD, the LIRR, LIBus and MNR); the New York City Police Department (NYPD), the New York City Fire Department (FDNY), the Emergency Medical Service (EMS) and the Office of Emergency Management (OEM).

Drills are conducted at key locations throughout the system, including at support facilities such as our Coney Island Rail Yard and at the MTA's Transit Museum where a decommissioned station and more than a dozen old subway cars provide true-to-life underground conditions.

After each event, OSS produces a series of "lessons learned," "critiques" and "follow-ups" that are tracked, corrected and incorporated into the next exercise.

Finally, in addition to performing emergency drills, all key NYCT operating employees are provided ongoing formal "eyes and ears" training; fire protection and evacuation training; and Dupont Safety training. To date, some 45,000 employees have been through these courses and personnel are rotated through that training on a regular basis.

Long Island Rail Road (LIRR); Metro-North Railroad (MNR) & Long Island Bus (LIBus)

While Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) regulations require one full-scale drill annually, the LIRR conducts a minimum of four major full-scale emergency preparedness exercises/drills annually, including one in New York's Pennsylvania Station, the busiest railroad station in the country. Likewise, Metro-North Railroad conducts a number of drills during the year, including one in Grand Central Terminal.

Like those at NYCT, the carefully crafted emergency scenarios require emergency responders to demonstrate skills in communications, fire fighting, rescue, extrication, hazardous material and first aid.

Since the LIRR operates in three of NYC's five boroughs (Manhattan, Brooklyn and Queens) as well as the counties of Nassau and Suffolk on Long Island, drills include a variety of players, most notably sister agency MTA LIBus, but also other members of the MTA family, including the MTA PD and NYCT. Other participants include the NYPD, the FDNY, NYC EMS as well as a host of county, village and town Police, Fire and Emergency Medical Services throughout Nassau and Suffolk.

Metro-North, which serves two of NYC's five boroughs (Manhattan and the Bronx) as well as Westchester, Orange, Rockland, Dutchess and Putnam counties in New York and Fairfield and New Haven counties in Connecticut, conducts its own drills with a similar mix of NYC agencies, as well as county, village and town police and emergency service personnel from both New York and Connecticut.

Railroad emergency preparedness training is conducted at a number of locations: The LIRR uses Penn Station, its Hillside maintenance facility, field sites throughout Long Island and the Nassau County Fire Academy. Two retired LIRR railcars at the Fire Academy also help provide commuter railroad-focused training to federal and state law enforcement agencies such as the FBI and the NYS Police.

All major LIRR & MNR terminals, such as Flatbush/Atlantic Ave Terminal, Jamaica Station, Grand Central Terminal, 125th Street, New Haven, as well as shop/yard facilities in New York and Connecticut have Emergency Action Plans that factor into the exercises and drills.

In addition to MTA-sponsored full-scale exercises, both railroads and LIBus participate in numerous tabletop, functional and full-scale emergency response and counter-terrorism exercises hosted by local emergency response agencies and county OEMs throughout their service areas.

Beyond drills and table-top exercises, both the LIRR and MNR provide ongoing training sessions for their own train crews as well as emergency responders from the NYPD, FDNY and EMS officials in the counties they serve. The LIRR is also intimately involved in the Penn Station Emergency Response Committee and the Penn Station Security Task Force which are comprised of operations, law enforcement and safety representatives from the LIRR, Amtrak and New Jersey Transit and representatives from the NYPD, FDNY, NYC OEM as well as State and Federal agencies.

As is the case with NYCT, both railroads' exercises include extensive and formal critique/debriefing sessions that may, in fact, result in practice tabletop scenarios that test out new changes in procedures and protocols.

MTA Bridges and Tunnels

MTA B&T operates 7 bridges and 2 tunnels *within* the City of New York. The most notable of those facilities include the nation's longest suspension bridge, the Verrazano Narrows Bridge, as well as the Brooklyn Battery Tunnel and the Queens Midtown Tunnel, two of the busiest in the world. All told those facilities carry approximately 900,000 vehicles a day.

Prior to 9-11 B&T exercises largely supported the NYPD's own mobilization exercises. Up to that point, one of its biggest preparations was drilling the regional disaster recovery plan for Y2K. But B&T was also part of major Special Events planning, such as for the NYC Marathon, which begins on the Verrazano Bridge. Those plans always included emergency contingencies that were practiced in pre-event drills.

On 9-11, B&T's traffic and emergency response effort was transformed dramatically as the Towers collapsed.

The Brooklyn Battery tunnel, itself engulfed in dust and debris, became the site of a major evacuation effort, as more than 500 customers were rescued by B&T personnel. Shortly thereafter 287 abandoned vehicles were removed from the Manhattan-bound tubes in order to allow emergency vehicles to pass.

In the ensuing months, as many as 30 dump trucks an hour transported debris from the site. All this was handled in a very coordinated fashion with the NYPD and NYC OEM due to previously established exercise relationships.

B&T has since conducted over twenty emergency preparedness drills. Many have been full scale multi-agency (MTA PD, NYPD, FDNY, MTA, OEM) exercises that have tested preparedness; response; inter-agency cooperation; perimeter security; Improvised Explosive Device (IED) mitigation; Hazardous Materials Spills, and; decontamination.

B&T also participated in a state-wide exercise, conducted by the NYS Public Service Commission, designed to evaluate the NYS emergency load reduction program.

As with its sister agencies in the MTA family, B&T is singularly focused on providing its employees with both formal and informal training opportunities that provide a safe and secure working environment. In that vein, B&T has also been fully engaged in Dupont Safety training since 1996.

Other MTA-Wide Emergency Preparedness Activities

Certainly, as you've heard from me today, we're committed to aggressively training and drilling our employees for potential emergencies. But over the past three and a half years we've also focused on making sure that our *customers* are aware of how they should respond in certain situations.

Through the creation of the widely recognized "*If You See Something, Say Something*" customer information campaign, we've informed our customers about being vigilant and in the process have enlisted their help by giving them an outlet to report suspicious activities: 1-888-NYC-SAFE. Since 2002, we've produced print ads, 10,000 posters a year and are in the process of producing a See Something, Say Something radio ad. Public response has been extremely positive and we have shared our materials with dozens of transit systems and municipalities around the country and the globe.

Over the last year -- and in direct response to the lessons learned from the Madrid bombings -- we both customized our ads to focus on packages left in transit vehicles *and* produced Customer Train Evacuation Brochures and internet-based evacuation videos that show how to properly evacuate subway and commuter railroad cars in an emergency. Over 6,000 printed copies of this information were posted on our subway and rail cars and we made both the printed material and videos available to our customers on our website, www.mta.info. In addition, we've made hundreds of these videos available to local police departments, community groups and the general public since February.

This year as a supplement to the more formalized training of our operating personnel, we also produced 65,000 Employee Safety Guides for all our employees that tells them what to look for and how to react in emergencies.

There is no question about the MTA's commitment -- philosophically and organizationally -- to doing whatever we can to be prepared for emergency situations, be they large or small. We believe that the current aggressive schedule of emergency drills that we conduct each year helps in the effort to protect our customers and our employees and to give them the peace of mind necessary to continue to go about their daily routines.

Thank you and I look forward to any questions you may have.

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